

T.J. Maxx evacuated after customer finds powder

BY JONI HUBBED

Hubbed@home.com.net

With reports of anthrax contamination and a general atmosphere of fear prevailing, a hazardous materials team that includes Farmington Hills firefighters has gotten quite a workout this past week.

On Wednesday, emergency personnel were called to T.J. Maxx, 30955 Orchard Lake Road, after a powdery substance was spotted leaking from a deer-shaped candleholder. After store employees determined similar items didn't contain the same powder, they alerted authorities.

According to hazardous materials specialist Mike Kish, samples scraped from the candleholder proved to be silica sand, often used in metal molding. Still, because authorities didn't know what was going on, the store was closed down and special precautions were taken.

"Sixteen people were told they had to take their clothes off and put on Tyvek suits, just in case it was something airborne," Kish said.

In addition to T.J. Maxx, neighboring stores lost business because of the fear over what might have been, Kish said. Similar reactions have had the Western Wayne hazardous materials response group more active than ever.

"Our haz mat team, which normally has 12 to 15 runs a year, has gone out on five runs in the last few days," Kish said.

Businesses are billed for the cost of the run, no matter what the outcome. Costs can run into the thousands, depending on how many people are affected.

Because the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11 in New York, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania have caused widespread fears about biological warfare, new procedures have begun, he

added.

Kish and fellow team member Don St. Clair, also a Hills firefighter, are responding to local calls to determine whether they are unfounded. On Friday, they picked up a package that has melted materials in it and responded to a business where a woman came into the office and found powder on the floor.

"We made her strip down and shower, and put on a Tyvek suit," Kish said, describing a standard procedure. "It's very embarrassing. It's very traumatic. She thought she was going to die."

While paranoia and fear are largely to blame for the rise in calls, Kish said hazardous materials specialists take each one very seriously. However, he added, "I don't think we're going to call life has mat team unless there's a real threat."

Oliverio from page A1

tive regarding where the funds came from...The agreement of sale protects the seller at every turn."

Oliverio said the purchase agreement required the city not to disclose information about contamination present on the former landfill site, if the sale didn't go through: "I think this is one of the most egregious breaches of fiduciary responsibility I've seen in my life."

The father of four said that in going door-to-door in the "triangle project" area -- bordered by Northwestern, 14 Mile Road and Orchard Lake Road -- he learned "Seniors in particular are very concerned about traffic. They're not in favor of roundabouts."

While roundabouts are favored by county traffic planners and Mayor Nancy Bates, Oliverio said, "It's not the choice of residents. Who's running the city?"

"It's the result of years of the same group being in charge. There are some very talented people in our community. It's a waste not tapping into that."

"They (the incumbents) are united like a crystal, they're almost desperate. They stress being a team player. I don't think it's great to be a team player, it's better to be an individual."

Of his opponent, Oliverio said, "She's been there too long. She's got the queen complex."

Oliverio said priorities would be to get citizens involved and to try and form citizen advisory committees to key issues.

Of 500 people Oliverio said he surveyed, 8 in 10 favor a dog park. He proposes a resident and non-resident fee structure for the park. "The important thing is that it be tax neutral," he said.

Oliverio proposes an audit of

the Farmington Hills Youth and Family Services after-school program. He charged that while organizers are seeking more money to support it, participation is declining. "How is it fair for seniors to pay for day care when they already raised their kids?" he asked.

Oliverio also proposes creating more parks, slowing development and getting more federal tax dollars returned to the city.

Farmington Hills city council and mayoral candidate forums continue at 7 p.m. Oct. 16 and 24 at City Hall, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake roads.

The Oct. 16 forum is sponsored by the Democratic Party. The Oct. 24 forum is sponsored by the Council of Homeowner Associations. Candidate forums Oct. 3 and 6 at city hall were sponsored by the Farmington Area Republican Club.

Bates from page A1

tion possible, because residents indicated they wanted it, through support of several Parks and Recreation millages that included funds set aside for the project.

Bates said that to deal with past contamination at a former landfill on the site, state environmental officials have directed the city to install a cap over the affected area. She said this can be done as the land is formed during dog course construction.

Bates rejects the charge made by some challengers that council is elitish, or not open: "We don't have any prior discussions. We don't have a telephone chain going."

"We aren't closed. Someone comes in and says 'We're unhappy with our zoning,' we immediately take a look at it. We do react."

"I think we have some pretty healthy discussions."

Bates said this will be her final run at public office, and she decided to take on one, last campaign to follow through with some efforts.

"I want to make sure the youth program is solidly in place. It's important to bring our young people into government. We've got to stop treating our kids like they're something that needs to be fixed. They're a vital resource and need to be treated that way," she said.

Her opponent, Ron Oliverio, has charged that residents reject traffic roundabout plans supported by Bates in the 14 Mile/Northwestern/Orchard Lake "triangle project" area. The mayor points to studies that show residents in other communities who opposed roundabouts

eventually change their minds, once they become familiar with the circular intersections.

"They are much less dangerous," Bates said, adding the improvement to traffic flow in the area "will make a huge traffic difference in our community and I'm going to fight for that."

On the issue of establishing a dog park, Bates said those who want such a park should follow the example of soccer, baseball/softball and skating groups that expanded facilities in the city by putting together a plan that did not call for public spending.

Bates said she builds consensus among local officials by making sure everyone has good information.

"I'm pretty non-combative as a general rule and I think I'm very respectful of citizens."

Early Bird Holiday Sale!
Boxed Cards
20% OFF
All Christmas and Hanukkah Boxed Cards
One week only October 15 - October 20

Greetings from...
On the Boardwalk
6909 Orchard Lake Rd.
West Bloomfield
(248) 855-2240

Mon - Fri, 10 to 6 • Thurs. 10 - 8 • Sat. 10 - 5

Child clinics offered

The Oakland County Health Division will provide a series of free, ongoing Child Health Clinics for children from birth to school entry age.

Services include: physical examinations; immunizations; vision, hearing and lab testing; growth and development screening; and counseling.

An appointment is required to participate. For more information, contact one of the following offices: north Oakland, Pontiac (248) 858-1311; south Oakland, Southfield (484) 424-7066; west Oakland, Walled Lake (248) 926-3341.

Michigan Center for Children & Parents
A Unique Early Intervention Preschool

Open Enrollment is Going on Now!

Call Kara Richardson at
248-737-5988

Located at 33360 W. 13 Mile Road
Farmington Hills

FARMER JOHN'S Greenhouse
WE OVERBOUGHT!
New Stock Daily.
50% OFF
TREES & SHRUBS
(6 month warranty on all sale shrubs)

We Have a Greenhouse Full of House Plants!

Perennials
Thousands to choose from!
25% OFF
We Grow Our Own

Hardy Mums
Great Selection!
New Colors!
It's Now The Time To Plant

Cocoa Mulch.....\$3.99
Reg. \$6.50 • While supplies last (2 cubic bags)

26950 Haggerty Road • Farmington Hills
248-553-7141

CELEBRATING OUR 21st ANNIVERSARY

HELD OVER!

21% OFF EVERYTHING IN THE STORE

CHOOSE FROM OUR ENTIRE STOCK of MEN'S & WOMEN'S FALL and WINTER FASHIONS NOW thru SAT., OCT. 20th

LIVONIA
NEWBURGH PLAZA
37205 W. SIX MILE ROAD AT NEWBURGH ROAD
LIVONIA, MI 48152

OPEN MON. thru FRI. 10-6 SATURDAY 10-6 734.591.0244

Life Line Screening
The nation's leading vascular screening service

Saving lives through preventive screening since 1993.

We'll be in Southfield!

Southfield Parks and Recreation
26000 Evergreen Road
Wednesday - October 17, 2001
Pre-Registration Required Call: 800-407-4557

There Are Three Ways We Can Help

Also...
Detect Osteoporosis in just 60 seconds!

1. Carotid Vascular Screening
2. Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening
3. Peripheral Arterial Disease Screening

Complete Vascular Screening - All 3 tests \$99

Visit Our Web Site: www.lifelinescreening.com

9545 Midwest Avenue, Suite D
Cleveland, OH 44125